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THE CONGRESS OF THE BEASTS,

Under the *Mediation* of the GOAT, for Negociating a Peace between the *Fox*, the *Aſs* wearing a *Lion*'s Skin, the *Horſe*, the *Tigreſs*, and other *Quadrupedes* at War: A FARCE of TWO ACTS, now in Rehearſal at a New, Grand Theatre in *Germany*.

To which is Prefixt a Large, Curious PRINT of the laſt SCENE of the DRAMA, being the *General Conference*. Done by an Eminent HAND.

Written Originally in *High-Dutch* by the Baron HUFFUMBOURGHAUSEN; and Tranſlated By J. J. H—D—G—R, Eſq;

Veluti in Speculo.

The SECOND EDITION Corrected; and Amended in the PRINT.

LONDON:

Printed for W. WEBB, Junior, near *Temple-Bar*. 1748. Price 1 *s.* 6 *d.*

THE

CONGRESS

OF THE

BEASTS,

Under the Mediation of the GOAT;

For Negociating a Peace between the Fox, the Ass wearing a Lion's Skin, the Hare, the Turkey, and other Quadrupeds at Rehearsal of a New, Grand Theatre

To which is Prefixed, a Curious PRINT of the last Sc[illegible] ANIMA, being the General Co[illegible] by an Eminent Hand.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Written Originally in Mock-Dutch by the Baron Ehrenhausen; and Translated By J. H—D—C—R, Esq;

With a Speech.

The Second Edition Corrected; and Amended in the Plan.

LONDON:

Printed for W. Wren, Junior, near Temple-Bar. Price 1 s. 6 d.

DRAMATIS BESTIÆ.

A Goat, *a Mediator.*
An Aſs, *cover'd with a* Lion's *Skin.*
A Horſe.
A Tigreſs, *with one Ear and half a Tail.*
A Wolf.
An Otter *without Ears.*
A Muzzled Bear.
A Buck-Hound.
} *Confederates.*

A Fox.
A Leopard.
A Badger *with one Ear.*
A Crippl'd Boar.
A Monkey.
} *Confederates.*

Two Yahoos.

SCENE, *a* Foreſt *in* Germany.

THE TRANSLATOR TO THE Candid READER.

HAVING ſpent a long and gay Life in the Service of the polite Part of this generous Nation, I am not a little vain that I am able to wind up the Bottom of it, by the Introduction among them of a more uſeful and moral Amuſement than could be gleaned up in *Italy* or *France*.

There ſhould be a certain Degree of Propriety obſerved in the Exhibition of publick Diverſions: And I cannot help taking ſome Pride to myſelf, for having ſucceeded in my Attempts to adapting ſuch Exhibitions as I had any hand in, to Times and Seaſons. For inſtance; The warlike Reigns of King *William* and Queen *Anne* had ſo enroughen'd this Nation, if a Foreigner may be pardoned the Expreſſion, that it was become neceſſary to introduce the *Italian* Opera, Ridotto, and Maſquerade, in order to ſoften and humanize our *Britiſh* Heros and Heroines. But ſeeing it is now become

no

no leſs neceſſary to call them back to their native Roughneſs, it gives me infinite Pleaſure that the ingenious Author of the following Drama has furniſhed me with a rational Amuſement fitted to both my Purpoſe, and the Neceſſity of the Times.

The Piece came too late to Hand to be exhibited this Seaſon. But if Heaven is pleaſed to lengthen out my Span 'till the next, I propoſe to graft the *German* on the Ruins of the *Italian* Opera: And for that Purpoſe ſhall ſpend the Summer in *Switzerland* and the *Empire*, where I doubt not of compleating a Company of Singers and Dancers that ſhall wake this Nation out of thoſe ſoft, golden Slumbers created by *French* Heels and *Italian* Pipes. There is a certain Maſculine Harmony in the *Teutonic* that invigorates the Body and Mind, which no other Language can vaunt of. And for this Reaſon, as I am a true Lover of *England*, I often lamented, ſince the breaking out of the preſent War on the Continent, that the *German* Opera had not been introduced here ſome Years before its Commencement. But we will hope, that *Fortune* will drop her Fillet the approaching Campaign, and ſmile on thoſe brave *Britons* that are already broke to the Fatigues of War, and accuſtomed to that manly Roughneſs of *Germans*, which I propoſe introducing next Winter.

But how neceſſary ſoever I may think the Introduction of the *German* Drama on the *Engliſh* Stage to be towards eradicating the preſent Effeminacy, it would ill become me, that

am but the Servant of the Publick, to attempt impoſing an unknown Language upon them. For which Reaſon I judged it proper to preſent them with a correct Tranſlation of the firſt Piece I intend to ſet out with next Seaſon, that, in the mean-while, there may be Leiſure for acquiring ſome Knowledge of the Original.

There is a long Preface of the Author's, which I omit, not to hang too heavily on the Patience of the *Engliſh* Reader, explaining the Plan and Deſign of his Work, the Uſefulneſs of *Moral* more than *Plot* in dramatic Writings; ſhewing the peculiar Qualities of the Beaſts of his Drama, and proving that heretofore all the Brute Creation ſpoke as well as the Serpent; with many other curious, and I ſuppoſe learned, Obſervations on the *German* Drama, which he does not ſcruple prefering to the *French* and *Italian*, and equalling to the *Greek* and *Roman*. But as Criticiſm is as little my Talent as Politics, the gentle Reader will, I hope, hold me excuſed if I follow not my Author in either.

As for that Part of the Work which falls to my Lot, all I can ſay, is, that the Tranſlation is as perfect as I could make it, and as cloſe as the two Languages would admit of. And as the Author makes no other Apology for introducing Quadrupedes in his Drama, and allowing them Speech and rationally, but that *Æſop* and others had done as much before him, I beg Leave to content myſelf with the ſame Excuſe for my Share in this Undertaking.

I cannot conclude without intreating the candid Reader to be assured, that I had no View to the present Congress at *Aix-la-Chapelle*, when I undertook this Translation, my Mind being solely bent on the Introduction of Manliness and the Eradication of Effeminacy from among a Nation I am so signally obliged to. Nor shou'd I have thought there had been the least Allusion between this Piece and what may be acting Abroad at present, unless my Bookseller, to whom I am obliged for my Title-page, had inserted some few Words in it that may seem Analogous.

THE

THE CONGRESS OF THE *BEASTS.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Scene, a Lawn on the Edge of a Foreſt.

Enter the Fox *and* Leopard

Fox. 'TIS for our common Intereſt that you appear diffident of me, and ſue to the *Aſs* for a ſeparate Peace.

Leop. The *Lion*, you mean?

Fox. I ſay the *Aſs*, becauſe ſuch he has proved himſelf, by waſting his Strength for a Crew that did not care if he was hang'd.

Leop. Thanks to the *Steed.*——

Fox. Ay; without the W—— *Horſe* we never had been able to take down that hereditary Enemy of our Houſe.

Leop. You indeed, Couſin, have reduced the *Tigreſs* in this Part of the World; but have been quite paſſive in proſecuting the War againſt her where I was more immediately concern'd.

Fox. That War of Yours has almoſt broke my Back. I wiſh it was ended any how.——

Leop. Any how, Couſin?

Fox. Lord! you are ſo teſty and jealous——— Yes, any how. Can't you ſee that it may be kindled at any Time, and with greater Proſpect of Succeſs———

Leop. I thought it had been ſettled between us to render this *Congreſs* fruitleſs; yet you talk of ending the War at any rate.

Fox. Yes, your Share of it; but not by a general Peace. I had brought off the *Wolf*, which would have ended the War on that Side two Years ago, if my Purpoſe had not been croſs'd by your Jealouſy and Ambition.

Leop. My Ambition, Mr. *Reynard*?———

Fox. Is this a Time for Altercation? Go to, Couſin, and learn to be wiſer.———The *Wolf* ſhou'd have been detach'd from the Confederates at any Hazard or Expence. Take him aſide, and practice upon him with Addreſs. He has a craving Appetite, and be it your Care to ſatiate it. Give him all he aſks; make him Preſents beſides. It will be in our Power to ſtrip him when we pleaſe.—— You won't find it ſo difficult as you may imagine to wean him from the *Tigreſs*, of whom he has Reaſon to be jealous, and She no leſs

of

of him. In ſhort, the *Tigreſs* thinks the *Wolf* already too great: But 'tis our Buſineſs to make him ſtill greater, that we may make her leſs. As I ſaid before, we can reduce him at Pleaſure.——You know the two great Points in View with us, is the Reduction of the two only Powers that cou'd obſtruct the Execution of our Plan of univerſal Influence.——

Leop. You mean the *Lion* and *Tigreſs*.

Fox. I do; and if I miſtake not, we have pretty nigh accompliſh'd our Deſign already.

Leop. The *Tigreſs*, indeed, has loſt an *Ear* to the cunning *Monkey*, and you have ſhorten'd her *Tail* for her; ſo that if we can ſave our Ally, the poor *Badger*, from her Gripe, I think we may bid her Defiance for the future. But the Reduction of the *Lion* is like to be a Matter of greater Difficulty.

Fox. Not at all; the Thing is already almoſt done. The *Lion* is but the Shadow of what he was. He reckon'd too much upon his own Strength, and, like an Oaf, has conſumed it vainly, and without Thought or Reflexion. If our Ill-luck had not thrown *Reſtoratives* in his Way, he had had, by this Time, a Foot in the Grave.——

Leop. Or cut his own Throat.——Ah, that Power, which our Supineſs has given him o'er the *Rivers* and *Lakes*!

Fox. Let us ruin his Confederates by *Land*, and we ſhall have Leiſure enough to undo him afterwards on that *Element*, which is as unſteady as himſelf.——The *Tigreſs* and *Wolf* were no leſs impolitic in hugging the *Lion* too cloſely, than he was in doling away his Subſtance upon them. They ſhould have huſ-

banded his Strength, that another Time he might ſtand in the Gap to ſtay the Progreſs of an Invader. But they have given him ſuch a Surfeit of War on dry Ground, and Subſidies, that they may both, hereafter, go to the D——l, before he will ſtir a Foot to ſave either.——Therefore, I ſay again, grant the *Wolf* more than he demands, provided he breaks with the *Tygreſs*, and our Work is done.——This is much about the Time that the *Horſe* comes to this Lawn to take a cool Breakfaſt before the Dew is off the Trefoil. Leave me to mould him to our Deſigns, while you work upon the *Wolf*, and raiſe the *Lion*'s Hopes of his ſevering you from my Alliance. ——Still do I call him out of his Name, ſo prevalent is Cuſtom; but he retains the Skin only of what he was, and is now as very a *Brayer* as any in the Foreſt.——Fly; the vain *Transformer* approaches. He muſt not obſerve that our Intimacy ſubſiſts.——Allay the Fears of our Friends. Aſſure the *Badger* of our Care and Protection; and let the *Boar* be ſatisfied that he ſhall be reſtored to his Cheſnuts. Reputation is of no leſs Neceſſity than Force, and the abandoning Allies is not the Way to maintain or acquire it.——Go to, Couſin; be wiſe, and be not jealous or ſuſpicious of you own Fleſh and Blood. [*Exit.* Leopard

SCENE II.

There is no altering Nature. My Kinſman is honeſt, but his Jealouſy is inſufferable. I put him in the Head of treating privately with the *Aſs*, and he had like to have negociated in good earneſt, tho' my Scheme went no farther than

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to lull the *Aſs* into Supineſs, and create a Jealouſy 'twixt him and his Confederates.——— But ſee the *Transfigurator* appears.

SCENE III.

The Horſe *enters.*

Good-morrow, gentle *Steed.* Your ſilver Hairs help no leſs to gild the Morning, and gladden the Eye, than thoſe bright Courſers that drag the Chariot of the Sun.

Horſe. Ah, *Reynard!* that oily red Rag of thine has beguil'd many an innocent Beaſt. But thy Glaſs is run out, and thou canſt deceive no more. Thy Pranks are become ſo notorious, that you ſhall no longer be able to impoſe on the World.

Fox. The World! alas, generous Steed! when did you know the World righteous in its Judgments? Is there an Inhabitant of the Forreſt that has not been cenſured? Who is there that has not ſuffer'd by evil Tongues? What Power, what Beauty or Virtue can fend againſt the Taint of ſland'rous Envy? Even you yourſelf, that are the Boaſt and Pride of the Brute Creation, who worthily fill the *Lion*'s Throne: You, who diſpenſe your Benevolence ſo equally and abundantly; You, who are the very Eſſence of Politeneſs, and Pink of Courteſy: You, I ſay, whoſe Perfections I vainly attempt to pencil, have not been able to elude the poiſonous Edge of Malice.

Horſe. What cou'd the vile Rabble ſay of me?

Fox. Rabble indeed they muſt be that cou'd ſpeak Evil of the Glory of the Plain. But ſuch is the

the Malignancy of pale-faced Envy, that ſhe —points her Darts moſt at the moſt deſerving.

Horſe. That is true: Yet ſtill what cou'd ſhe urge againſt one, who, as you juſtly remark, has been as univerſally as eminently courteous and benevolent?

Fox. Already has the *Gudgeon* ſnapp'd at the Bait. (*aſide.*) Falſehood you may believe; for Envy has no Acquaintance with Truth.

Horſe. Truths or Falſehoods, out with them. I wou'd fain know what the Fiend cou'd invent of me.

Fox. Pray excuſe me.——'Tis not for me, who eſteem and love you ſo paſſionately, to endanger your precious Life.

Horſe. Endanger Life! how?

Fox. Alas, Sir, you reflect not on the Conſequence. As much a Philoſopher as you are, you may not be able to ſtem the Torrent of your Paſſions: And do not all Calentures proceed from a Fermentation of the Fluids in the Body?

Horſe. I thank you for your friendly Care of my Health; but on this Occaſion 'tis needleſs —— I am compos'd, and ſhall remain ſo, tho' Malice ſpeak its worſt.

Fox. I hope not. (*aſide*) Evil from an Enemy is expected, and may be borne. But to be traduced by Friends; to be aſperſed by ſuch, at leaſt as ought to be Friends; to be villified by thoſe whom one held up againſt a Current of Power that wou'd otherwiſe have ſhook them to Atoms.——

Horſe. What Fleſh cou'd bear it?——'Sdeath! I burn till I know my ſecret Enemies.——, Pray, my worthy Friend, inform me who?——

Fox.

Fox. Thoſe Snakes are, whom you warm'd in your hoſpitable Boſom.——

Horſe. Oh, Ingratitude!——My Mind miſgives me—Pray, kind Couſin, ſpeak and give Eaſe to my labouring Breaſt.

Fox. Couſin! I ſhall be brother'd if I hold out a little longer. (*aſide*) Excuſe me, Sir. To do an ill Office is againſt my Conſcience; and Honour forbids the turning an Informer even againſt an Enemy.

Horſe. Generous Soul! How tender his Conſcience! (*aſide*) My beſt and worthieſt Friend, will you ſee me thus rack'd, and not aſſwage my Pain?

Fox. Time was, you boaſted of my Friendſhip; but I have been on the wean, of late, in your good Graces; and for that, for which you ſhou'd have erected me a Statue of Braſs before the Gate of your Herring-Hovel.

Horſe. I wiſh you had not nam'd it: But the Inſult was unbearable, of ſhutting me into my own Cloſe, and tying up my Hands from fulfilling my Engagements.——

Fox. Has not that ſeeming Inſult, which you know to have been originally of your own Projection, afforded you the fairer Pretext of luring the *Lion* into ſuch conſuming Schemes as muſt bring him in the End to couch, fawn and lick as you ſhall be pleas'd to direct? Already, you ſee, the Scheme has had its Effect.

Horſe. I am not inſenſible of the Favour,——But what a Look had it, to ſee me yield to be chain'd ſo as not to be at Liberty to ſuccour my beſt Friend in Diſtreſs?

Fox. I ſay beſt Friend too, who, after your conferring infinite Obligations on her, can't afford you a good Word.————

Horſe.

Horſe. Who, the *Tigreſs* not ſpeak well of me?

Fox. Did you ever know any of that haughty Brood act or ſpeak generouſly or gratefully? Profuſe by Nature, and vainly indulgent to the voracious Cormorants about them, they are always needy, yet think all the World obliged to ſupply their Wants; and incroaching and over-bearing, as well by Habit as Nature, they imagine all the World obliged to fight and ſupport their Quarrels.

Horſe. You ſay true.——Ungrateful Baggage! to traduce me that have almoſt beggar'd my *ſecond-ſelf* to keep her on her Legs.

Fox. Nay, for the Matter of beggaring the *Lion*, as it was Part of your own Scheme, *ab incipio*, it need not be imputed to her as Favour. For glad you might be of ſo ſpecious an Opportunity of taming the fickle Growler, who, in Plight, is ever as haughty, reſtive and inſulting, as he is abject and crouching when taken down and reduced.

Horſe. I can perceive you are no Stranger to the Conſtitution of the *Lion*——The greedy *Wolf* too, I ſuppoſe, and the covetous *Otter*, have made no leſs free with my Character than the ungrateful, ſquandering *Tigreſs?*

Fox. A grateful Return, truly, for ſo immenſe an Expence, and ſo imminent Riſque, to ſay, *That you were an aukward, lubberly, ignorant, conceited, Country Put, that aſſumed inſufferable Airs ever ſince you held up the Whip over the generous* Lion, *whom you flea unmercifully yourſelf, but oblige him to be ſtingy to every other Creature living,*

Horſe. The poor *Lion* is flea'd indeed; but was it not to ſupport thoſe ſland'rous Wretches, that he is become the Shadow of what he was?

Fox.

Fox. Were you but to ſee how they ſimper and loll out their Tongues at you as the *Lion* totters along the Glade.——But let me not wrong them of the Merit of a late Diſcovery, which they take ſpecial Care to make publick for your Credit.

Horſe. What?

Fox. *That they plainly perceive the* Lion *to be metamorphoz'd to an* Aſs; *that it muſt have been by your Sorcery; and that he now retains nothing of the noble Creature he was, but the Skin, which you cover him with, for Decency's ſake.*

Horſe. Inſupportable! Shall I bear this from Creatures that breathe but by my Favours? What was the *Tigreſs* to the *Lion*, if I had not influenc'd him to ruſh to her Aid? If I had not perſuaded him that the *Ballance of Power* was wound up with her Safety, he had not ſtirr'd an Inch to ſave her.

Fox, That Bug-bear.——What wou'd you have done without that Staff?

Horſe. Oh! I have a Couple more to lean on occaſionally, without recurring to *Religion*, which has been a Gin to catch Woodcocks with, Time immemorial.

Fox. You mean the *Old Lion's Whelp*, and——

Horſe. Yourſelf.——Name but the *Fox*, and immediately the Gall of all the *Lion*'s Attendants flows up to their Eyes.—But to examine the black Ingratitude of thoſe abandon'd Traducers, who defame me. If the *Tigreſs* have loſt an *Ear* to that ſkipping, crafty Creature, the *Monkey*, wou'd ſhe have had a whole Piece of Skin on her Back, by this Time, if I had not prevail'd on that cover'd *Aſs* to ſupport her even beyond his Strength? Wou'd the

Otter have come off, the laſt Summer, with the Loſs of a *Tail* only, if that *Aſs*, who they ſay is in my Keeping, had not defended the Canal that leads to the Place of his Reſidence? You, Mr. *Reynard*, who was prepar'd to curry his Hide for him, beſt know if I exaggerate. And as for the *Wolf*, ſee how plump and ſleek he looks ever ſince my intereſting the *Lion* in his Cauſe? Yet theſe are they that ring my Diſpraiſe throughout the Foreſt.——— Oh, Revenge! Sweet Revenge! I will retire awhile to meditate. (*going.*)

Fox. We ſhall have your Company anon at the general Conference?

Horſe. 'Twill come to nothing,——

Fox. Forbid it Heav'n!——— I am ſick of the War.

Horſe. A Copy of your Countenance.

Fox. Sincere, 'pon Honour! Therefore ſhall be obliged to you, if you promote the Work of Peace.

Horſe. If I thought you in Earneſt.

Fox. As much ſo as the *Tigreſs* and *Wolf* are for continuing the War, in Hopes of Acquiſitions, while your generous *Ward* ſaddles himſelf with the whole Expence.

Horſe. Rather call him plain *Aſs* than a *Ward* o mine; for, Mr. *Reynard*, tho' he be ſo, you know one wou'd not have ſuch a Word blab'd abroad.

Fox. Ay, that's true: Beſides, who knows what Figary might take the Animal in his wiſe Noddle, ſhou'd he hear it reported that h wore Leading Strings.

Horſe. 'Pſhaw! what Matter how he thinks. He may ſwagger and rant, according to Cuſtom and bounce of Liberty and Free-will; but al h

he has of either, ſince I firſt had taken the Length of his Paw, he may put into his hollow Tooth.

Fox. You found him ſomewhat ſtubborn at firſt.

Horſe. But I ſoon found the Secret of breaking that untractable Spirit.——

Fox. As how?

Horſe. By applying properly to the Paſſions of thoſe in his Retinue.

Fox. I underſtand you. How green were the Politicians of the laſt Age?

Horſe. Mere Babies! well may Folks be driven to beg from home that know not how to work on the Paſſions. But there is my Excellency, Mr. *Reynard.* I ſtudy the Creatures I am to practice upon, and know them ſo perfectly, that I can even lure them to be their own Corruptors.

Fox. Self-Execution, I knew to be common among them; but *Self-Corruption* is to me quite a Novelty.

Horſe. Lud! Mr. *Reynard*, who wou'd have thought you ſo dull of Apprehenſion? Is it not eaſily conceivable, that a *few*, intruſted by the *whole*, may be perſuaded to give a great deal that they themſelves may ſhare in the Spoil.

Fox. You reckon it Self-Corruption where the Bribe is of native Growth.

Horſe. Aſſuredly. What is it but giving with one Paw, and receiving with another?

Fox. Did none fall between? Ah, ſuttle *Palfry!*

Horſe. Where ſo much Muck is ſhovell'd about, you may believe I take Care to ſhuffle ſome to manure my native Paddock.——Thus,

my Friend, have you the whole Secret of that Sorcery imputed to me by that ungrateful Crew, whom I had ſo eſſentially ſerved.——But I will be reveng'd.——And, Mr. *Reynard*, if, in the Promotion of a Peace, I can be uſeful, you may reckon on my Impartiality.

Fox. I deſire little for myſelf, ſo Juſtice be done, and my Friends are contented, I ſhall be pleas'd.——For Inſtance; as you are ſtraightned for Room at home, why might not I be permitted to inſiſt that your Paddock be inlarg'd at the Expence of two or three of your neighbouring, droniſh, praying *Baboons?*

Horſe. Ah, Mr. *Reynard*, wou'd you ſtand my Friend ſo far.——

Fox. My Word is my Bond.——There ſhall be no Peace unleſs your Poſſeſſions are inlarg'd.—Here is my Paw upon't.

Horſe. My beſt Friend!——I'll go ſeek my Allies, and diſpoſe them to your Purpoſe. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Fox. Who wou'd have thought that clod-pated Animal capable of moulding the once bold Ruler of the Foreſt, into an *Aſs?* He diſcovers the Magick by which he wrought the Change.——Ay; all-ruling *Corruption*; that double-edg'd Sword which hews all before it, as I myſelf have often experienc'd.——But ſee, the *Otter* bends this Way, I'll avoid him till I have wherewith to practice on his predominant Paſſion. [*Retires.*

SCENE

SCENE V.

Enter the Otter.

Otter. This Congreſs can come to nothing, tho' the *Fox* ſhou'd be more ſincerely bent on Peace than I think he is.——How ſhou'd it, while moſt of the Parties at War find their Accounts in the Continuance of it? The *Tigreſs* hopes to recover all ſhe has loſt to the *Monkey* and *Fox*, and wreak her Reſentment on the unhappy *Badger*, fallen under her Diſpleaſure. While ſhe and the greedy *Wolf* are ſupported at the Expence of the *Aſs*, ſo long will they be Enemies to Peace. And tho' enfeebled the *Aſs* himſelf be, I fear he is not hearty in his Progreſs to Peace. But can it be otherwiſe, while he is in ward to the *Horſe*, who ſo largely benefits by the expenſive Buſtles of his Pupil; and who beſides may have an Eye to *Acquiſitions* by protracting the Peace.——But, alas! why ſhou'd I wonder at others being indifferent to Peace, ſince I myſelf am unreſolv'd. The War forced a domeſtic *Maſter* on me, and I know not whether War or Peace will ſooneſt rid me of him.——Hy, ho!——Lord *Reynard*, you are the Author of my preſent Woes.

[*The* Fox *comes forward.*

SCENE VI.

Fox. My old and worthieſt Friend, I participate of all thy Cares, which I will alleviate at the Hazard of my Life, if you truſt to my Conduct.

Otter.

Otter. Can I rely on one that has already wrung my Tail off; and by ſo doing againſt the Laws of all good Neighbourhood, forced me to own the Power of a Family I had abjured not half a Century ago?

Fox. Therein behold the Judgment of the All-righteous. You don't forget how you had diſpoſed of your late *Maſter* to a *Neighbour*.

Otter. Was it not lawful to pull a Thorn out of one's Foot?—

Fox. But not in Order to put it in that of another.

Otter. I ſee you are a Caſuiſt. I wiſh you may prove as good a Phyſician, to cure me of this new *Taſkmaſter*, whom your Incroachments had brought upon me.

Fox. You wou'd have had none, if you had withdrawn from the War, as I often adviſed you. But by your blowing neither hot nor cold, you oblig'd me to make that late Puſh on your advanc'd Poſſeſſions, which rouz'd your moody Domeſties to ſaddle you with the Load you complain of.——'Tis only a freſh Salmon and a Cream Cheeſe. (*Enter a* Yahoo *with a Baſket*) I wiſh, my dear Friend, it had been more, and better for your ſake.—But to the Purpoſe of getting rid of your new Maſter.

Otter. Ah, my noble Friend! help me to draw that Thorn, and command me for ever. It ſhall be Peace or War as you pleaſe. If you incline to continue the War, I will ſo embaraſs Things at home that you ſhall ſucceed where you will. And if you be bent on Peace, I will ſo diſpoſe my Auxiliaries that you may command it.

Fox. As my Conqueſt muſt leſſen the Influence of your new *Maſter*, with thoſe who contri-

buted

buted moſt to his Elevation, you muſt not take the Alarm, if I puſh the War home to the very Center of your Poſſeſſions.——— Cou'd I take to the laſt Dyke of your Country, you know all wou'd be as ſafe in my Poſſeſſion as in your own.

Otter. Ay, ay; on a Peace, you wou'd reſtore all.———

Fox. That belong'd to you; ay, to a ſingle Fiſh Pond. But as for what I conquer'd from the *Tigreſs*.———

Otter. You and ſhe may ſettle that Point as you pleaſe. I am not much oblig'd to her Ladyſhip. Had ſhe withſtood the Temptations of the *Lion* the War had never come home to me.

Fox. You mean the *Aſs*.

Otter. I do ſo. Yet I remember him a *Lion*, and a ſturdy one.

Fox. About a Century ago, when he gave your Jacket a handſome Drubbing. Eh, eh!

Otter. And of a later Date, when he curried your Hide for you, and was well nigh unkennelling your Honour. Eh eh!

Fox. When my Great Grandſire was grown old, and in the Tutelage of an old Sorcereſs.

Otter. Marry, I think the poor *Lion* has been in as bad Tutelage of late.———That d——d *Horſe*, that has transform'd him to an *Aſs*! From a little, louſy *Hobby*, whom No-body car'd a Ruſh for, he would be a Beaſt of Conſequence forſooth, and egg'd on the War that he might find an Opportunity of enlarging his Paſture. He pretended an Eſteem for the Lady *Tigreſs*, tho' he panted in Secret, no leſs than his Neighbours, that her Nails might be cloſe par'd. And ſo far he has ſucceeded; for

for her right and faireſt *Ear* is in the Poſſeſſion of the *Monkey*, a Creature no leſs jealous and watchful of the *Horſe*'s Motions than of the *Tigreſs*.——Ah, Mr. *Reynard*! 'tis well for you that he has had the Management of the *Lion*.

Fox. Still you forget that he is no longer the Terror of the Plain.

Otter. Thanks to that vain, ſwollen Animal, the *Horſe*.—

Fox. Whom I wou'd not wiſh ſeparated from the *Aſs* for ever ſo much.

Otter. One eaſily ſaw your *tendre* for the *Horſe* in your late Slackneſs to ſupport the bold *Whelp* that had puſh'd almoſt to the *Aſs*'s Hovel.—Faith, old Acquaintance, 'twas no Indication of an o'erflowing Generoſity not to have ſeiz'd ſo favourable an Opportunity of aiding a Family you had a thouſand times ſworn to ſerve. You ſaw how I behaved on the Occaſion.——

Fox. Yes; you ſent Beaſts without *Teeth* to ſuccour the *Aſs*.——But as for your Sarcaſm concerning my Generoſity, on that Occaſion, you are to know, that as a private Perſon I heartily love that hapleſs *Race*; but as the political Parent of a large Family of my own, I am not at Liberty to indulge my Inclination. Thoſe elevated to high Dignities are ſaid to have two Conſciences? and it may with equal Truth be ſaid that they have, or ought to have two diſtinct Affections; one private, the other publick. My Heart bends to the exiled Race, but my Reaſon warps me from them. I may play them on the *Aſs* occaſionally, affecting to ſerve them; but in the Main I cannot wiſh the *Aſs* to be from under the Tuition of the *Horſe*. While he is there, I am ſure he will

will remain an *Aſs*. But I don't ſo much like that puſhing *Whelp*; ſhou'd he once neſtle in the *Hovel*, I doubt he would roar ſo as to wake and unite all the Beaſts of the Foreſt againſt me, as a Female of his Race did, not quite half an Age ago.—I have examined that *Whelp* narrowly, and I like him not. He is too thoughtful and prying for me to wiſh him in my Neighbourhood. He might remember old Slights to my Coſt.—No, no; give me the friendly *Nag*, in the Direction of the *Aſs*, for my Money.

Otter. For what Purpoſe then do you harbour that young *Whelp*, ſince you never deſign to ſupport his Intereſt?

Fox. For what Purpoſe have you and the *Aſs* put yourſelves to an immenſe Expence to perſuade the *Bear* to travel in the Depth of Winter?—

Otter. To be at hand in the Summer to aid us againſt you.

Fox. An Impoſition. — You knew the *Bear* would be of little Uſe to you after ſo fatiguing a Journey, even ſhould the *Monkey* and others permit him to proceed. But you, imagin'd he might help to frighten me into ſome Conceſſions.—You now have my Anſwer about harbouring the *Whelp*.—Zooks! See where your Allies ſteer.

Otter, They may not ſee you and I together. Shou'd they think we are on good Terms they would be as ſhy of me as a cackling Poullet wou'd be of thee.—Farewel. Help me to fling the new *Rider* that beſtrides me, and I am yours to the Stumps, *exit*.

Fox. Eh, eh! he wiſhes me to help him off with his Rider; I may, but 'tis that I may fit in the Saddle myſelf. Nor can I fail, unleſs that cunning Elf, the *Monkey*, ſtand in my Way. That Urchin puzzles me, and is the firſt that I cou'd neither bully nor cozen. Perhaps the waking his Jealouſy may throw him more implicitly into my Power. As he watches all my Steps, he muſt have obſerved the Intimacy 'twixt me and the *Horſe* and *Otter*. I wiſh the *Tigreſs* wou'd move this Way to finiſh the Scene.——And behold, to my Wiſh ſhe comes.—Madam, propitious Heav'n has at length flung me the bleſs'd Opportunity I long have yearn'd for. (*The* Tigreſs *comes forward*) Ah, Madam! was there a Caſement to my Heart you might behold your fair Self ſeated there high above all other Conſiderations.—My Dame is in Years and Ailing; and your Mate a Log, that is no Match for one of your high Mettle and Birth. Deign but to ſmile on me, and we ſhall give the Law to the whole Brute Creation.

SCENE VII.

Tig. To put away my Huſband! Heav'ns what an impious Propoſal was that? But the crafty Wretch muſt ever deal in ſuperlative Wickedneſs.—Yet will I ſtifle my Reſentment to ſee if I could win him to my Deſign on the profidious *Monkey* (*aſide*). Alas, Sir what Charms can you ſee in me that am but the Shadow of what I was, and have loſt an Ear and almoſt all the Tail?

Fox.

Fox. The latter is with me, and you may command it at Will. I'll ſow it on ſo as it can't be ſeen that it had ever been ſtitch'd.

Tig. But my Ear, which I can leſs ſpare than my Tail.

Fox. That I ſhall procure you too if you implicitly throw yourſelf into my longing Arms. Ah, lovely Matron! how joyouſly ſhould we forget old Father Time together—(*offers to embrace*). I ſee the *Monkey* peeping from yon' Bow'r, (*aſide*). Ah, Madam! pity him that breathes but for thee. [*Kneels to her.*

Tig. Riſe, Sir; is that a Poſture for a Conqueror?

Fox. Rather the Victim of your all-conquering Eyes. [*Still kneels.*

Tig. You are ſo prevaling.—Here, Sir, take that as an Earneſt of my further Smiles. (*gives her Paw to kiſs*) My Allies look this Way; this Conduct may rouſe them to act more vigorouſly in my Cauſe. The *Lion* is become a mere *Aſs*, and, beſides, is worn down to a Skelleton; and the *Horſe*, who leads the Dolt, ſecretly wiſhes no Increaſe of my Power tho' he pretends otherwiſe. The *Wolf* is ever craving, and baſks and fattens at my Expence; and the *Otter* is more intent to get rid of the Bit in his Jaws than the making me whole. Cou'd I count on the Sincerity of this crafty Suitor, or mould him to a Breach with the *Monkey*, I might be reveng'd of that ungenerous Neighbour.—Ah! what would I give to be at Liberty to return the Urchin's Favours! [*Aſide.*

Fox. Madam, you are thoughtful.

Tig. Thinking how you and I ſhall drive the World before us.

Fox.

Fox. But the *Bear*, that unlick'd Clod! I am ſorry you would encourage him to quit his native Woods. He may chance to take a Liking to your fairer Foreſts, and hereafter croſs your beſt Purpoſes.

Tig. He comes not at my Expence; yet to oblige you I'll contrive to delay his Journey; or ſhou'd I fail of that, I will help to muzzle him.—See, Mr. *Reynard*, your Power with me already.

Fox. Infinitely obliging.—Yet let me rather truſt to the *Monkey*, whoſe pinking Eyes I ſee kindling with Jealouſy. [*Aſide.*

Tig. Ah, Mr. *Reynard!* lead me from that hateful Creature. See how ſleek and ſhining his Coat ſince he has feaſted on my poor Ear.—Covetous Varlet! who knows nor keeps Faith but as it tends to his Intereſt.—I can't bear the Sight of the odious Wretch.—Adieu, Sir; I ſhall ſee you again before the general Conference. [*Exit.*

SCENE VIII.

Enter the Monkey, *grinning and ſkipping.*

Fox. I am pleas'd to ſee you in ſo high Glee; and yet this approaching *Bear* might have ſtuck in your Stomach as well as mine.

Monk. Who can help cracking his Guts to Fiddle-ſtrings to ſee you adoring an earleſs, tailleſs Termagant that would tear out your Liver and mine if ſhe could.

Fox. She is not in half ſo great Pain for her *Tail* as for her *Ear*.

Monk. And ſhe ſhall have both mine before I part from it.

Fox.

Fox. You would find it difficult to keep either, ſhould ſhe and her Allies, aided by the *Bear*, fling me on my Back, or e'en force me to ſpew up what I had ſwallow'd ſince the War.

Monk. I thought you more determin'd than to fear without Cauſe. Examine your Enemies, and you will ſoon diſcover their Weakneſs. The *Lion*, who ſets the whole hoſtile Machine in Motion, is no more that powerful Beaſt he was, tho' he ſtruts and vamps as much as ever. He ſtill affects wearing the *Lion*'s Skin, but all elſe about him denotes the *Aſs*, the Dupe he has been to all the World, but more eſpecially to my Neighbour the *Horſe*. The *Tigreſs* has little elſe than her native Fierceneſs to truſt to, now that the *Aſs* is but the Shadow of what the *Lion* was: And the *Wolf*, unaided by both, muſt ſoon truckle to you and your Ally the *Leopard*. Then as for the *Otter*, he is leſs anxious about your Conqueſts than of getting rid of his *new Maſter*, and of my Demands upon him, and my Vicinity.—Againſt ſuch Confederates what have you to fear? Let the *Bear* come on. I engage to muzzle him by the Way, or cut out ſuch Work for your Enemies as will oblige them to curſe the Day they bargain'd with that Savage Lump of Clay to dance to their Fiddle ſo far from home.

Fox. 'Tis not far to the cheriſh'd Paſture of the beloved *Palfry*. Eh, eh!

Monk. Nor to the Vitals of the *Otter*; or even to her Ladyſhip's faireſt remaining Glades.—Mr. *Reynard*, you are by Nature wary, I am ſo by Reaſon. In vain ſhould I go about denying that I am diffident of you; in vain likewiſe ſhould you attempt perſuading me

that

that you are not equally diffident of me. But one Thing we may both be ſure of, which is, that we ſhall be true to one another as long as it ſhall be our reciprocal Intereſts. The lower you take the *Tigreſs*, the ſafer ſhall I be. The lower you reduce the *Otter*, the leſs ſhall I have to apprehend from the Haughtineſs and Vanity of the *Horſe*, who has aſſumed great Airs of late, and might pretend, by the Help of the *Aſs* and the *Otter*'s new *Maſter*, to dictate and lord it in my Neighbourhood.—You can't think how that thick-ſkull'd Animal ſwagger'd among us ever ſince he has practiſed his Arts on the credulous *Aſs*. But I'll take him a Peg lower or it will coſt me a Fall.———I could ſee you paying Court to the *Tigreſs*.———You may gain her, but it muſt be at my Coſt, on whoſe Friendſhip you may ever reckon, becauſe it will be my Intereſt to cultivate yours. But can you ſay as much of her you woo'd in my Preſence? Raiſe her and ſhe will ſurely attempt pulling you down. Need I put you in Mind of the Enmity of her Anceſtors? Need I call to your Remembrance the Haughtineſs and Fierceneſs of her own Nature, the Injuries ſhe reckons you did her, and her unrelenting Temper. Revolve theſe Matters in your Mind; weigh them in the Scale of your Prudence, and determine which Party you'll take, which Courſe you'll ſteer.——— Methinks I can ſee the Meaning of your ſeeming Earneſtneſs to preſs forward this Buſineſs of a Congreſs. I can ſee likewiſe that you probably will ſucceed in ſlack'ning the Bands which bind your Enemies together.—Go on

and

and proſper; my Wiſhes go with you; and you may count on my Power as Occaſions offer.———You ſtand not in need of Advice, or I might point out the Method of diſſolving the Congreſs, and caſting the Odium of the Diſſolution on your Enemies, as you did almoſt half a Century ago.———But I have done——it may be notic'd that we are cabalting together, which might breed a Suſpicion that may impede the Execution of our Schemes.———Farewel! I'll meet you at the Cave as ſoon as the Sun withdraws to take a Nap. [*Exit.*

SCENE IX.

Fox. He is in the right. Intereſt is the only Link that binds; and all Profeſſions are vague that are not founded on that firſt Principle. The *Otter* could upbraid me for not ſupporting the late vigorous Attempt of the *Lion*'s Whelp to diſpoſſeſs the *A*——. But was it my Intereſt that the *Aſs* ſhou'd reſume his priſtine Shape and Vigour? While I benefit by the *Nag*'s Influence in the *Aſs*'s Family, I can never think it eligible to abet an Invaſion of his Property. But it may be urg'd, that the *Whelp* is my Relation; ſo is the Young *Leopard*, and nearer of Kin, beſides being wedded to my Daughter; yet how paſſively have I ſupported him in his late Attacks upon the *Tigreſs* and *Wolf?* And why was I not warmer in his Cauſe, but becauſe

cause it was my Interest to push my Conquests nearer home. But again; it will be said, that I had engag'd my Heart to the *Whelp*. In answer, I say, that *Honour*, separated from *Self-Interest*, is a Phantom, a Chimera, a Cloud, which Fools embrace.

A specious Theme, untaught in Wisdom's School;
A flimsy Web to catch the vulgar Fool.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Scene, a Cave at the Foot of a Rock in a Foreſt.

A Cropt Badger *advances from the Cave.*

Badg. TO what End was my Journey to this Congreſs? If it pleaſe not the *Fox*, there can be no Peace; and if ſincerely bent upon it, neither he nor the *Leopard* will poſtpone it for my Sake. So Proviſion be obtain'd for the young *Leopard*, in my Neighbourhood, I ſhall be left a Prey to the ravenous *Wolf*. Already has he, and the inexorable *Tigreſs* wrung off my Ears, and gutted my Habitation of moſt of all that was valuable there; yet are they not ſatiated, but will oblige me to ſign a general Releaſe at this Congreſs.——Oh! Conſcience, Juſtice, Generoſity! whither are ye flown? Not to the *Lion*, once fam'd for harbouring all three; for he open'd the Sluice whence iſſues all the Evils that are come upon me of late.——Ah! that ſleeveleſs, flagitious *Treaty*, which forced me to an Alliance with the *Fox* and *Leopard!*——I am told the *Lion* is no longer the Noble, Powerful, Generous Beaſt

he was; but is become an *Aſs*, ſtill affecting the Garb and Mien of what he had been. Though this Intelligence come from the *Fox*, a ſuſpected Perſon, yet am I warranted, from my own Experince of his Conduct, to believe the *Transformation* real and effective. Who but an *Aſs* wou'd waſte his own Strength to increaſe that of the *Wolf*, who has no very diſtant Claim to the *Lion*'s *Skin* he wears, and who, ſhou'd the generous *Whelp* be out of his Way, wou'd puſh home that Claim, and might much ſooner find Abettors than the hapleſs *Whelp?* Again; What Connexion is there between the *Aſs* and *Tigreſs*, that he ſhou'd ſpin himſelf, like a Spider, to weave a Web for her, who, if ſhe cou'd win the *Fox* to her Intereſt, wou'd drop her preſent Supporter? But what greater Indication can there be of the *Transformation*, than the Injuſtice of firſt forcing me on the Meaſure they blame me for, and then moving Heaven and Earth to puniſh me for that very Meaſure? The poor *Boar* ſuffers in common with me; but his Crime, if he committed any, was ſpontaneous. A wide Difference there is then between us. Yet is he like to fadge better than I, becauſe, luckily for him, he happens to have a *Family* Intereſt in the *Horſe*, who, as Fame tattles abroad, forces the blinded *Aſs* to play at Leap-frog.——But behold the *Boar*.——Welcome, my Brother in Diſtreſs; I was afraid your feeble Limbs wou'd not have borne you hither.

SCENE

SCENE II.

Enter a Crippl'd Boar.

Boar. Neighbour *Badger*, I crept hither that you and I might conſult how to behave To-morrow at the General Conference. I gave myſelf up implicitly to the *Fox* and *Leopard*, not that I had a good Opinion of them, but becauſe I harbour'd a worſe of the *Tigreſs* and *Wolf*, who are ſuperlatively ravenous and ſavage.

Badg. See you not here the ſad Proof of their Ferocity and Voracity? But you, tho' they enjoy your Poſſeſſions at preſent, are ſure to bend them to Humanity by your Power with your Kinſman, the *Horſe*.

Boar. I hope ſo; and have lately diſpatch'd a Miniſter to the *Lion*'s Court for the Purpoſe.——

Badg. Had you call'd it the Court of the *A—*, you wou'd not be miſtaken, if there be any Truth in Report.

Boar. They do talk abroad of a *Transformation* there, which does leſs Honour to the *Lion* than *Horſe*.

Badg. Marry! I know not where moſt Honour is due, whether to the *Guardian* or *Pupil*. The latter weakly gives up his Underſtanding, and reſigns his Power. But does not the other too proclaim his Folly in exerciſing his Power in ſuch a Manner as to endanger his own immediate Intereſt and Safety? For ſhou'd the *Lion*, or let us call him *Aſs*, fall under his Load, by over-driving, how long after ſhall the *Driver* himſelf be able to keep upon his

Legs?——But 'tis no Buſineſs of ours; at preſent we muſt wiſh well to our Allies only.—How do you find them diſpoſed?

Boar. Fair Words coſt little? and you know the *Fox* is no Niggard of thoſe. The *Leopard*, tho' naturally more reſerved, is not leſs flattering: And yet I am told no Mention has been made of either you or I in his late Propoſals to the *Lion*.

Badg. Ah, Neighbour! when ſhall we weaker Beaſts grow wiſer, and pay Attention to our own immediate Intereſt only? In allying with the more Powerful, what Chance have we of bettering our Situation? If they ſucceed they may chooſe whether they keep their Word with us; and if they don't, we are ſure to be ſacrificed to the obtaining any tolerable Conditions of Peace for them. I have ſo mean an Opinion of the Honour and Friendſhip of our preſent Allies, that I would throw myſelf at the *Lion*'s Feet for Protection, had he not been *tranſform'd* to that wavering, cringing, ſilly Animal an *Aſs*.——Bleſs us! what a Conjunction is there, the *Leopard* and *Wolf*! I wiſh it does not portend the Detention of my *Ears*, which the latter holds and ſets his Heart on.

Boar. Or of my Acorns and Cheſnuts. Ah, my afflicted Friend! If after all our Sufferings and Merit theſe great Powers ſhould be lukewarm in our Cauſe.——

Badg. Let us retire and liſten; perhaps we may learn our Fate from their Converſe. [*They retire.*

SCENE

SCENE III.

Enter the Leopard *and the* Wolf.

Leop. I agree that it becomes the Great and Eminent to entertain Notions of Honour; but they ſhould be careful not to ſpin the Thread too fine. And, if I miſtake not, thoſe Notions you advance are of too delicate a Texture for one in your Circumſtances. Should the Fortune of the War turn the Tables upon you, would not your Family have Cauſe to upbraid you for not cloſing with my friendly Propoſal?—Reflect on the Impotence of your Allies. The *Tigreſs* is on her laſt Legs, and the *Lion* in a galloping Conſumption. See how the puny *Badger* has baffled the joint Efforts of your Alliance.

Wolf. But we are returning again to the Charge.

Leop. To your own Undoing if you proceed. The *Badger* is now in a Condition to ſmile at your Efforts, and wiſhes you would work your own Ruin in attempting the ſecond Siege of his Rock.—But why don't you proceed?

Wolf. Waiting for the Approbation of our Ally, the *Lion*.

Leop. For his Aid you might better ſay, to ſet your Arms in Motion. Does not this Delay, and your late Supplication to the *Lion* manifeſtly ſhew your Impotency? Yet do you heſitate to fall into our Meaſures that are your Nephews.

Wolf. To wave the Conſideration of former Slights and Affronts both by yourſelf and Couſin *Reynard*, I am willing to own that you have

have a natural Claim to my Affection. But you'll admit that my own Whelps have ſtill a ſtronger. If I quit my preſent Alliance, I reſign my Family to your good Liking; and when ſurrounded by *Cubs* of the Blood of the *Reynards*, may be free or in Chains as they ſhall pleaſe.

Leop. Fie, Uncle! to talk off Chains to be impoſed on your Family by any of our Blood!

Wolf. Ambition, Couſin, is blended with our Nature, and where it is the predominant Paſſion, as with the *Reynards*, 'tis not eaſily kept within proper Bounds. You know that my Veins flow with the Blood of the *Reynards*.—

Leop. And of the *Lion*'s too. What is become of that young intrepid *Whelp* your Relation?

Wolf. He is where it will be attempted to lure me, if I ſhould out-live the elder Branch of my *Dam's* Houſe; under the Eye of the *Fox*, who keeps him to frighten the *Lion*.——

Leop. The *Aſs* more properly.—Surely, Uncle, you can't be a Stranger to a *Tranſformation* the Foreſt rings of.

Wolf. The *Lion* indeed is grown of late ſlower in his Motions, and more an Œconomiſt.

Leop. Well he may, when worn down to the Stumps by bluſt'ring and wrangling, and medling in all the Quarrels of the Foreſt. What was the *Tigreſs* to him? or what could he have gain'd or loſt if the Foreſts near you had been otherwiſe divided than they are? But that *Horſe*, who leads him of late, had his Views in putting the weak *Dolt* upon Projects foreign to his natural Intereſt.——See where he comes tottering to both Edges of the Path, as if intoxicated with Liquor. Perhaps you would not care he ſhould ſee us together.

Wolf.

Wolf. He is grown inſufferably jealous of late.

Leop. A certain Indication of his Impotency.—Hang no longer on him, but recline on us your own Fleſh and Blood. You ſhall chalk out your own Terms.——Adſo! he is juſt upon us——this Way. [*They retire.*

SCENE IV.

Enter the Aſs, *cover'd with a* Lion's *Skin.*

Aſs. What can cauſe the late Shyneſs of my Allies? They ſeem to avoid me; and far from dwelling on the Muſick of my Roar, as formerly, if I open my Mouth they fall a yawning as if ſome Driveller had been braying.—One meets me of a Morning, and aſks with a Simper, Lord, Sir, have you had a good Night's Reſt? I fear you ſat up late, or drank more freely than uſual. Another ſmiles in my Face, aſking if the Courſe of Phyſick I am in was for the Gout, the Gravel, or —— And a third tells me, as if I had ſhook like an Aſpin Leaf, that an Ague in the Spring was Phyſick for a King.——What can all this mean?——Is ſuch the Politeneſs of Courtiers? Is ſuch the Gratitude of Allies I had ſuccour'd beyond my Strength?———Allies do I call Beaſts that keep the Field at my Expence, and who wou'd ſcarce be known in the War without me? Yet for all their Impotency, they take Airs upon themſelves as much as if the War had been all mine, and they maintain'd it for me. The *Wolf*, with the Digeſtion of the *Oſtrich*, is conſtantly craving, and lowrs moſt frightfully if not quickly ſupply'd. But of late he is grown unuſually ſullen and reſerv'd. The

Otter,

Otter, far from thanking me for ſtopping the Career of the *Fox* laſt Campaign, murmurs hideouſly that I had purpoſely brought all his Misfortunes upon him to pave the Way for his *new Maſter*. Neither is the *Tigreſs* leſs ſparing of her Reflexions, occaſionally. The other Day I would have ſnatch'd a Kiſs from her, and unhappily hurting her wounded Ear in the Scuffle, ſhe angrily ſaid, *This, and all my other Woes, I owe to your braying Majeſty*; and ſo flirted away from me.——— Pray, Heav'n! that Sorcerer, the *Fox*, has not bewitch'd my Confederates ſince theſe Conferences begun.——— I never lik'd this Congreſs, knowing what Tricks that arch Villain was capable of if he had an Opportunity. But I muſt yield to the Intreaties of my Allies, who might otherwiſe arraign me of Wilfulneſs and Ambition. They forced me likewiſe into that other Snare laid for us by that crafty Juggler, the Mediation of the *Goat*. A decrepit Animal, worn out with Lechery and Age! what Hopes can we entertain that he ſhall be able to conciliate Minds ſo inflamed, and ſo many jarring Intereſts? But ſuch are the Shifts and Wiles of *Reynard*, who is no otherwiſe to be made honeſt than by being ſoundly bang'd into fair-dealing.——— Oh! that I had been permitted to hunt him down by *Water* only as I was inclin'd! But there is no having one's own Will among ſo many that pretend to direct. Beſides, my cheriſh'd *Steed* was not inclin'd to, nor cou'd have had any Share in the Chace if it had been *aquatile* only; and I wou'd not for the World but my dear *Horſe* ſhould ſhare in the Glory and *Emoluments* of a Land War. In this he makes

ſome

ſome Figure, in that he would not be ſo much as known. See how ſleek and wanton he's grown ſince the War, and what Court is paid him more than even to me that am the Support of it.——Methinks I hear the Chattering of the *Monkey*; I wiſh I could have him a Moment to myſelf, without the *Horſe* whom he can't abide tho' his near Relation, to ſee if I cou'd wean him from the *Fox*.

SCENE V.

Enter Monkey.

Monk. Ha! is your Worſhip meditating on Religion or Faſhions? On the latter I judge by the Cut of your Skirts. Eh! eh!——Pray Sir, which was your Taylor, *French* or *German?* Both, or I am miſtaken. One took Meaſure of you, and the other cut the Hide. Let me ſee, as I live, you are well fitted. (*He ſkips round him.*) One wou'd ſwear it grew to your Back if it was not for thoſe lovely *Ears* that jut above your wiſe Forehead. Eh, eh!

Aſs. You are ever arch and jocoſe; but at preſent Serioufneſs would better become the Situation of our Affairs.

Monk. What would the Wiſe-acre be at? [*Aſide.*

Aſs. Mr. *Monkey*, there has been a Coolneſs 'twixt you and I of late, which you are ſenſible I gave no Cauſe for.

Monk. No, Sir; great Wits, they ſay, have ſhort Memories.——If I miſtake not, you have a pretty Nack at *partitioning*. Don't you un-

derſtand dividing the *Bear*'s Skin before he is dead? Eh, eh!

Aſs. You are pleas'd to be Laconick.——But the preſent State of Affairs, and particularly of *Religion*, calls upon you to turn along with us, your natural Friends, on the common Enemy.

Monk. Religion, Sir!——Pray what Religion do you think I am of?

Aſs. Of the pure———

Monk. Religion of *Rulers*, that have none of their own, like Princeſſes 'till married, but are ready to embrace any dictated to them by Self-Intereſt. Have you not heard that I am building a Temple for *Baboons* in my Capital?

Aſs. Yes; and was ſorry.——

Monk. I was ſo wiſe as to tolerate all Religions for the Happineſs of Society and Improvement of my Country. Look you, Sir, you have given me a Surfeit of *Religion* and *Ballancing*, two Objects that have employ'd your Attention for many Years. And pray examine what you have got by the vain Purſuit.

Aſs. I'll never permit Errors in Religion, nor Inchroachments on public Liberty.

Monk. Oh! the *Ballance of Power* is a ſweet Toy for one to waſte his whole Strength after. Pray, you mighty Hewer of Windmils, and Embracer of Clouds, do you ever view your own ſweet Phiz in the Silver Stream?

Aſs. Not ſince the War. I leave the Care of my Dreſs to my beloved *Horſe*.——

Monk. Whoſe Buſineſs it is to keep you in Ignorance, and not let you ſee the Aukwardneſs of your Figure.

Aſs. Aukwardneſs of my Figure, Sir! What do you mean by it?

Monk.

Monk. That you will be anon the beſt dreſs'd Beaſt in the Foreſt.——But methinks your *Ruſſian* Taylor is ſomewhat ſlower of Motion than your preſent Wants ſeem to require. Eh, eh!

Aſs. Sir, my *Ruſſian* Taylor, as you call him, may chance to take Meaſure of ſome Folks Backs that cock the Tail very high at preſent.

Monk. O la! now you talk of Tails, I ſee you have a Couple. Spare one to your beloved *Tigreſs*, who has loſt her own. Eh, eh!

Aſs. I thought you One of Buſineſs, but find you a Trifler.

Monk. Becauſe I don't liſten to your vain Propoſals that are but the Shadow of what you were in Strength of Body or Mind. You ſee not the Change in your Perſon, you perceive not the Decay of your Fleſh, tho' viſible to all that look at you; nor the Decay of the Faculties of your Mind, tho' obvious to all that converſe with you. But ſuch are the Effects of *Ballance-hunting*, and being in *Ward* to my Neighbour the *Horſe*.

Aſs. Sir, as I take it, this Impertinence does not become you, nor ſhall I bear it.——

Monk. O, pray take Care that you don't fall, Should you lift up the fourth Leg to correct my Inſolence.——Eh, eh!

Aſs. This is paſt bearing.——To be treated thus by ſo contemptible a Creature.——

Monk. That dares tell you Truth, which is more than your favourite *Horſe* ever did or will.——

Aſs. I'll hear nothing to the Diſadvantage of my Friends.

Monk. I know none you have to your Back, but ſuch as affect Friendſhip for what they can flatter you out of. Of theſe is your Friend,

the *Bear*, who melts down his Greeſe in hurrying to your Relief. Eh, eh!

Aſs. No more; or——

Monk. Nay; if you won't take Advice, and will be in a Paſſion, 'tis Time to leave you.——Your Servant. [*Exit. grinning.*

SCENE VI.

Aſs. I am ſorry I was not able to keep my Temper. His Friendſhip wou'd add ſuch Strength, and give ſuch Weight to our Confederacy, that we ſhou'd preſently bear down the Enemy. But he is gone.——I'll try what the *Horſe* can do with him.——But now I think on't, all his Coolneſs to me is out of Enmity to that generous Creature.——Ay, ay; Neighbours and Relations ſeldom agree well together.——Who have we here? the *Fox.* I hope he has not over-heard the Impertinence of that Urchin.

SCENE VII.

Enter the Fox *bowing and Cringing.*

Fox. I am over-joyed at an Opportunity of paying you my Compliments on ſo auſpicious a Day as that which gave Birth to the Lord of the Foreſt.

Aſs. What do you mean, Mr. *Reynard*; what Day?

Fox. That of your Birth.

Aſs. A Miſtake.——

Fox. Why, Sir, the Gaiety and Richneſs of your Dreſs wou'd ſpeak the joyous Day, if you had not receiv'd upon it the Compliments of the *Monkey*,

key, whom I juſt met coming from your Levee.

Aſs. Theſe Raſcals come purpoſely to affront me, becauſe they know I am ty'd up by the Privilege and Neutrality of the Place, aſſented to by all Parties. But if I can catch the Varlet within my Reach, I'll forget where I am for a Moment. (*aſide.*) I thought indeed to keep the Secret, as I have not the neceſſary Equipage here to entertain as became my Dignity. Otherwiſe, Mr. *Reynard*, you wou'd have had a Card; for on theſe Occaſions I forget that I have Foes.—You ſeem to admire my Dreſs. I ſhall be vain of its Elegance if you approve of my Taſte.

Fox. I never ſaw any thing ſo elegant and becoming.

Aſs. If it lay a little cloſer behind. Don't you think, Mr. *Reynard*, it wou'd bear to be taken in on the Crupper? I know you are a Judge. Pray lay your Paw upon't, and feel how looſe it ſits. [*As the* Fox *felt, the* Aſs *kick'd him down with his hind Foot, and went off feebly, but braying and exulting.*

SCENE VIII.

Fox. Thus are the beſt Fencers oft put out of their Play by rough Bunglers. Who cou'd ſuſpect that ſo ſtupid an Animal wou'd have had the Contrivance, or have indulg'd ſo miſchievous a Thought?——But I deſerve it for taking Advice of the *Monkey*, who, no doubt, had ſome ſelf-intereſted View in urging me to crack a few Jokes on the *Aſs*.———That Urchin has a diſtant Purpoſe in all he does. He has ſome End in widening the Breach 'twix

me and the *Aſs*.——If I can, by his Means, be eaſed of the Weight of the *Bear*, I muſt for awhile bend to his Will. But after I ſhall have put an End to this War, I muſt contrive to take him down before I begin another; otherwiſe I ſhall have him a Clog on my Wheel to that Power and Influence I have in View. Shou'd I be able to baffle my preſent Enemies, and end this War happily, I ſhan't need another. But ſhou'd not I ſucceed ſo as to dictate all around me, and be able to keep my Conqueſts, I ſhall end this War ſoon, that I may the ſooner begin another, which I propoſe ſhall put me in the full and quiet Poſſeſſion of what I hold at preſent. Ah! this Congreſs will ſtand in my Way to Conqueſt, if I can't render it abortive.—We are to meet anon.—I'll make a Viſit to the *Mediator*, and plan out for him the Conduct he is to obſerve. He is feeble and infirm, and wants to have his Memory refreſh'd. As for his Intentions, I cannot doubt they are favourable to our Side of the Queſtion, ſince the Honour of the Mediation was procured him by my particular Influence and Addreſs. If the Company get Wind how I came by my Lameneſs, I ſhall become the Jeſt of the Foreſt. To be overreach'd by an *Aſs*! Shameful! What will the World ſay?——He will have more Senſe than to proclaim his Infraction of the Ceſſation; and I can impute my Limp to an Accident. [*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE IX.

Scene a Conference of the Aſs's *Confederates, under a Spreading Oak.*

Enter the Horſe, Tigreſs, Wolf, *and* Otter.

Tig. I cou'd be pleas'd you had not loſt Sight of him. He is ſo feeble that I wiſh his Spindles may be able to bear him hither,

Wolf. I wiſh rather that he has not fell in *Reynard*'s Way, who wou'd ſooner bear him from, than to us.

Otter. Never fear his falling in Love with *Reynard*, to whom he bears a natural Antipathy; I rather fear he is fallen in Love with himſelf, and fell in ſome Pond by the Way, where he had been viewing his new Trappings. Eh, eh!

Horſe. I cannot anſwer for his Conduct of late, he is grown ſo uncommonly whimſical.—— How do you think he ſerved me not long ago in the Company of a few ſelect Friends, who had join'd me in adviſing him to promote the Work of Peace as ardently as he cou'd? He ſcrambled on my Back, and ſwore if he muſt make Peace, I ſhould bear him to the Congreſs.

Tig. How did you bear the Affront?

Horſe. As a prudent Wife wou'd the Impertinence of a drivelling Huſband; ſmiled at the Whim and turn'd it off as a Joke to divert the Company. But when we were got by ourſelves, he had it to the Quick.

Otter. How does gentle Correction ſit on his proud Stomach? Eh, eh!

Horſe.

Horſe. Better than any one won'd imagine. He'll kick and flounce, and ſwear and rant; but when that ſwaggering Fit is over, you may lead him in a Ruſh Collar.——Here he comes; ſee what you can do with him, that I may not be put to the Neceſſity of exerciſing any Authority I may have. I wou'd expoſe him as little as I cou'd.

SCENE X.

Enter the Aſs.

Aſs. A Villain! to take ſuch Liberties with one of my Figure! I will ſhow him the Difference; I will ſo.——

Tig. Sir, you are diſcompoſed.——

Aſs. I am ſo, Madam. And who wou'd not, to be made the Ridicule of Varlets not worth the hanging?

Tig. Pray, Sir, who offended you?

Aſs. No matter, no matter. The Jeſt was paid for, and that's enough——Well, this Meeting was to ſettle the Steps to be taken at the General Conference——I ſay no Peace, unleſs that public Spoiler, the *Fox*, be humbled to the Earth. Amputation; Amputation, I ſay. Let him be purſued till he have nor a Leg to ſtand on, nor a Tail to ſweep the Duſt in Folks Eyes.

Tig. 'Twere to be wiſhed the Power of offending cou'd be taken from *Reynard*; but what Proſpect is there that he ſhall be reduced by continuing the War?

Aſs. If you and others had done as became you, he had been brought low before now. But you ſhifted off the Burden to me as if the Quarrel had been wholly mine, tho' in Reality I had nothing

nothing to do with it; and had I been wiſe wou'd have minded my own Buſineſs at Home and left the Burden and Honour of the War to thoſe whom it belong'd.———But I muſt be perſuaded forſooth?

Horſe. Huſh! You forget where you are. [*Aſide to the* Aſs.

Aſs. 'Sblood! tell me not of Places and Seaſons. I ſay, and I'll ſtand to it, that it was not friendly to involve me in a Quarrel I had no Concern in.

Horſe. You'll expoſe yourſelf if you oblige me to exerciſe my Authority.———You underſtand me.—— [*Aſide to the* Aſs.

Tig. I am ſorry to ſee the potent Lord of the Foreſt in ſo peeviſh a Mood. You are ſullen for being brought into the War, and are teſty for being urg'd to get out of it.

Aſs. Now I am in I wou'd fain get out of it with Credit.

Otter. Credit! ſuch another Phantom as *Honour*, I ſuppoſe.—E'en keep it all to yourſelf, and get me out of the War with Safety.

Horſe. So your Fiſh and Cheeſe be ſafe, the War may take Care of itſelf for thee. Eh, eh!

Otter. I don't find that any of you, except the generous *Lion* (*pointing ſneeringly to the* Aſs) are leſs inamour'd with dear *Self-Intereſt* than the Fiſh-loving *Otter*. You, Mr. *Palfry*, had a View to *Acquiſitions* in egging on the War; and tho' it was a Neceſſity on the *Tigreſs*, and partly ſuch on the *Wolf*, Self-Intereſt was not however the more out of the Queſtion. But my lordly Neighbour there was actuated ſolely by his *public Spirit*, which has engag'd him, to my Knowledge, to be a Party, and a Principal too, in all the Brangles

that have been in the Foreſt for the laſt half Century, and more.

Aſs. For which I have dearly paid. But, my Friend *Otter*, you know I have not always had the free Exerciſe of my own *Will* for moſt of the Period you mention.

Otter. Like a wiſe Ruler as you are, you ſuffer'd yourſelf to be *Govern'd*—by Fools and Knaves. (*aſide.*) But the Truth is, Neighbour, you have a natural Itch to *Medling*, thruſting your Noſe into other Folks Affairs, and are no Enemy to kicking and cuffing. ——You'll excuſe my Plain-dealing.

Tig. Nor to *Cock-fighting*, and *Bull* and *Bear-beating*; and what ſhews better the Nature of the Beaſt than his Diverſions? Eh, eh!

Otter. Marry, if one were to judge of your Lady-ſhip's Diſpoſition by your Diverſions, he muſt be a Mate of high Mettle indeed that dares venture upon you; for except tippling and quarrelling I know no Amuſement you delight in.

Tig. And that I may have the greater Leiſure for Tippling, you ſee I am for ending this Quarrel the ſooneſt that can be. Eh, eh!

Aſs. What, without the Participation of the *Bear*, who comes ſo far to help worrying that arch Deceiver?

Otter. I muſt confeſs 'twou'd be very uncourtly to bring his *Beariſh* Majeſty ſo great a Way from home, and not ſolace him with a *Fox-hunting* Match, before he returns. Eh, eh!

Tig. I fancy he may be brought to excuſe the Unpoliteneſs, ſo he be reimburs'd his Travelling-Charges.

Otter. Of that he took ſpecial Care before his ſetting out.

Wolf.

Wolf. Prudence is a commendable Virtue.

Otter. Certainly; and it is my Friend the *Lion*'s good Luck and mine to meet none but *prudent* Folks. But of all who have done us the Honour to participate of our *Bounties*, the *Bear* has uſed us with moſt Ceremony. But I impute it to his being of the *Greek* Church, wherein Ceremonials are ſaid to be thought eſſential.

Tig. I did not think the *Bear*, of all Animals, wou'd have ſtood much on Ceremony.

Otter. 'Tis a Sign you don't know him. Wou'd you believe that my Lord *Lion*, and myſelf were too full Months battling with him to permit us to pay him in Bills of Exchange, which are light and portable, rather than encumber him in his Journey with Specie. But there was no prevailing.

Tig. Was not his Obſtinacy rather owing to too little *Faith* than too much Ceremony? Eh, eh!

Aſs. I wiſh he were here to ſee if his Courage exceed his Faith.

Otter. I wiſh you had never hector'd me to make Trial of either.

Aſs. Would you be hunted down by the *Fox*?

Otter. Thank you for bringing him upon me; and am ſtill more in your Debt for helping me to a leſs powerful, tho' not leſs deſpotic, *Lord.*——— You underſtand me.

Horſe. A *Saviour* you mean; for to ſuch he help'd you in your Diſtreſs.

Otter. And much good he did me all the laſt Summer and Winter too, except in the latter to have join'd you in bullying me into an Expence I am unable to ſupport.———Lord *Lion*, you are, or might be if you wou'd, rich and powerful, and you are by Nature generous

and free. Now, I, on the contrary, am poor, and am by Nature frugal and cloſe: Therefore are we the unfitteſt to carry on the War jointly that ever were coupled together. Name of God then if you be for continuing the War, take my Share of it; you are no leſs welcome to the Honour of it than the Expence.

Aſs. I can ſee that *Reynard* has been wheedling all of you in my Abſence. He dreads the coming up of the *Bear*, and cringes and fawns.——

Otter. What can he more than reſtoring all his Conqueſts? Happy had it been for us if he had been taken at his Word when he firſt made the Offer!

Aſs. My dear *Otty*, let us have one fair Stroke at him before we give out, and I ſhall love you dearly.

Otter. Such has been the Language any Time theſe three Years paſt. And what have you got but Confuſion and broken Bones by perſevering to hope, every Summer, to knock him down? One wou'd have thought, the laſt Spring, you wou'd have ſwallow'd him up Fur and all, yet was he permitted to neſtle within my Domains without ſo much as an Attempt to cut his Wezon by either your mighty Self or my new *Task-Maſter*.

Aſs. Unforeſeen Accidents, and Superiority of Numbers.——

Otter. Which very likely may bring the *Fox* to my laſt Dyke if not obſtructed by a ſudden Peace.——By my being urgent for Peace, I throw the Odium of any ill Succeſs that may attend the Continuance of the War, on my *New Maſter*; and ſo get more ſurely rid of him

him than I can hope by the moſt *ſolid* Peace. (*Aſide.*)

Wolf. Shou'd *Reynard* be *ſincere*, a Peace may certainly be grafted on this Congreſs, if Lord *Lion* does not impede it.

Tig. See that you don't obſtruct it by inſiſting to keep what you have torn from the *Badger*.

Wolf. Madam, I ſhall deſire to keep nothing that you had not given me a right to.

Otter. Pſhaw! Pſhaw! Name it not. Cou'd ſhe give a Right that had none?

Tig. Mr. *Otter*, never any thing went to my Heart ſo much as the being perſuaded to gratify the *Wolf*, by that Treaty, at the Expence of my own Honour, and the Memory of my *Dad.* But there was no keeping him in Temper without my arming him with that colourable Title to Part of his Neighbour's Poſſeſſions.

Otter. My worthy Friend here lives in thin Air, near the *Alps*; therefore may be excuſable for having a more than ordinary craving Appetite.

Wolf. I don't ſee that my Whet is keener than her Ladyſhip's that had raiſed ſuch unheard of Contributions on that very *Badger*.

Otter. They ſay that what's got over the D——l's Back goes under his Belly: And ſo it ſeems; for her Ladyſhip is not a Whit the richer for thoſe immenſe Contributions raiſed out of mere Poverty and Want.

Wolf. She ſurely eſpies much Affluence when ſhe can meditate a ſecond Viſit to the *Badger*.

Aſs. Which ſhe poſtpones till I lay down her travelling Charges.

Otter.

Otter. An Honour which I ſhou'd be proud on, if her Ladyſhip had not thought you more worthy.

Aſs. Oh! dear Sir; you are extremely welcome to ſtand in my Boots.——

Otter. Not for the World. I know myſelf better.—

Tig. And am I thus to be fobb'd off by a Joke? I wou'd have you to know, Sir, that I am not deſtitute of a Reſource.——And that's enough. [*To the Aſs.*

Horſe. Why wou'd you put her Ladyſhip in ſuch a Paſſion for the Value of ſuch a Trifle as ſhe requires? [*Aſide to the* Aſs.

Aſs. 'Oons! Man! do you call that a Trifle, which none of your Generation ever ſaw himſelf Maſter of, before you had the fingering my Purſe?

Horſe. Softly, Sir, if you pleaſe. Thoſe Airs become you as ill as your new Covering.—— Take it for your Pains if you are expoſed; you may thank your own Indiſcretion. [*Aſide to the* Aſs.

Otter. Nay, nay; for that Matter I think my Neighbour excuſable, conſidering how exceſſively burthenſome the War has been to him.

Tig. He beſt knows why it has been continued againſt my Will and Opinion. Is it not therefore juſt that he pays the Piper who drags the Company to dance the Hays.

Aſs. Madam, are theſe your grateful Returns for relieving you in your Diſtreſs?

Tig. Wou'd I turn my Tail on you, I cou'd have what Terms I pleaſe from the *Fox*; ſo that in my Relief, as you term it, you ſought your own Safety more than mine.——Much oblig'd am I to you that forced me to ratify the Reſignation of my Right *Ear* to the *Monkey*, and lured

lured me to riſque the looſing my Tail in agreeing to begin the Fray on this Side of the Foreſt. My Sweep is already gone by following your Advice; yet you ſtill wou'd perſuade me to grant *Proviſion* for the young *Leopard* out of that little which remains.

Wolf. I ſee the Vapour of Diſunion riſing among the Confederates; therefore, if I ſwerve not from the Maxims of my Family, I ſhall look immediately to my own diſtinct Intereſt. (*Aſide*) ——Let us forbear Reproach, and unite for the Purpoſe of Safety. About this Time the grand Conference opens. Let us repair thither, and feel the Enemy's Pulſe.

Otter. I wiſh the Enemy may not have thumb'd thine to ſome Purpoſe. (*Aſide*) I like the Advice. Come, let us jogg on, Neighbour *long Ears*, and ſee, if by thy Addreſs, we can't turn the Tables on *Reynard*, and transform him to an *Aſs*, as one of my Acquaintane has been of late.

Aſs. You ſhall ſee what a Figure I'll cut there—Let me be the *Aſs*, if I don't make the Foreſt ring with the Juſtice of our Cauſe, and the Deceit and Ambition of the common Enemy. ——It has been ſaid, that the *Fox* gains by Negociation what he looſes in the Field. I ſay, he ſhall looſe by the Pen what he gain'd by the Sword.

Otter. And ſurely thy Word may be taken, who, by a long Arrow's Length, are ſubtiller than the *Fox*, and more arch and engaging than the *Monkey*———Hy for the Field of Victory.——Allons Meſſieurs. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE XI.

Scene, a Spring at the Foot of a Rock in the Foreſt.

The Fox, Leopard, Boar and Badger, *as if in Conference.*

Fox. My Friends and Allies, let me perſuade you to calm your Suſpicions, and harbour a better Opinion of our Honour and Juſtice than to ſuppoſe any Conſideration can induce us to abandon you. If my Couſin, the *Leopard*, has not mention'd you in the ſecret, ſeparate Negociation that had been lately on Foot between him and the *Aſs*, 'twas becauſe nothing was meant by it, but to amuſe the Simpleton, who thought to detach my Kinſman from his own Fleſh and Blood.

Badg. Thus lowly do we bend the Knee in grateful Thanks.—(*The* Boar *and he bow to the* Fox) But may I have your Leave. ———

Fox. You have full Liberty. Speak with Freedom.

Badg. The *Wolf*.———

Fox. Tho' he be my Uncle, I am not blind to his Faults. He has a ſharp Appetite, and a Hawk's Eye to his Prey.———You are afraid we ſhall acquieſce in his detaining thoſe Poſſeſſions of yours, which the Fortune of the War had put in his Hands.———Fear it not; and that you may be ſure we ſhan't deceive you, extend your View, examine Matters with Serioufneſs, and you'll perceive, that it never can be the Intereſt of our Houſe to contribute towards aggrandizing the Family of the *Wolves*. The *Tigreſs* is no leſs jealous of their

their growing Power, tho' at preſent in Alliance with them. And I wonder the *Wolf*, a Beaſt of Foreſight, does not ſee that it wou'd be his Inteteſt ro ſtrengthen rather than weaken the *Badger*, whoſe Friendſhip he ſhou'd cultivate as an ulterior Counter-balance that he may one Day ſtand in need of.———But enough on the Subject at preſent. Let us to the Conference, where you ſhall hear your Cauſe defended by all the Ability I am maſter of.———My Couſin and myſelf will follow. (*Exeunt the* Boar *and the* Badger) Couſin, I am pleas'd with your Treatment of the Enemy. The *Aſs* grows ſulky, and will be neither led nor driven into a Peace by his Confederates, on a Suppoſition that he can ſecure you when he will, by throwing to you thoſe ſweet Morſels he detain'd from you ſince the laſt general War. You find the *Wolf* inclin'd to wiſh that Propoſals might come from us; urge him no more; for in a few Days more, my Life he will be glad to make them himſelf. ——If the News we expect ſhou'd arrive this Evening, the Confuſion it will put the Enemy in, will ſave us Appearances, and all the Drudgery of a long, formal Negociation. What News from the *Monkey*, ſince Morning?

Leop. That he ſhou'd be at the Conference, and hoped to come there attended.

Fox. By the *Bear*, I ſuppoſe.—'Tis the artfulleſt Urchin I ever knew.———He keeps me for ever at Arms Length.—Here you not the Braying of the *Aſs*? the Conference is already open'd, and the *Aſs*, I ſuppoſe, is laying down the Law as dogmatically as if he had been really the *Lion* he once was.———Vain Animal! But 'tis fit we make our Appearance to

awe him a little, elſe he may frighten the old Mediator into Fits. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XII.

Scene, a ſmall Plain in the Midſt of the Foreſt, riſing at one End.

The Goat, *on an elevated Ground, has on his Left, in a ſemi-circular Form, the* Aſs, *the* Horſe, *the* Tigreſs, *the* Wolf, *and the* Otter; *and on his Right, the* Fox, *the* Leopard, *the* Boar, *and the* Badger.

Fox. Venerable Mediator, (*addreſſing himſelf to the* Goat) If your Impartiality, and the Juſtice of the Cauſe, I undertake to maintain, had not inſpired me with Hopes of ſucceeding, I ſhou'd not attempt meaſuring Words with the lordly Orator who heads the Confederacy againſt us. He is ſkill'd in all the Arts of moving the Paſſions, whereas I am only capable of ſpeaking Truth.——

Aſs. That is as much as to ſay, I lie.—'Oons! Sir; what do you mean by it?

Fox. Your Excellency perceives the Difficulties I labour under.

Goat. The Affront reaches me more than any.—Sir, I am apt to think that you forget where you are, and the Reſpect due to the Mediation.

Aſs. Sir, I know I am before an old *Goat*, whom I neither ſought nor wiſh'd to meddle in my Affairs.——If you are angry that I reſent foul Language in your Preſence, the ſooner you lay down your mediating Cap the better.

For

For I tell you over and over, that I'll knock down any Son of a W——— that dares offer me the leaſt Affront, tho' all your horn'd, bear'd Generation were here to take your Part. (*the* Horſe *whiſpers him*) Prithee, tell me not of all your Stuff of Politeneſs, and courtly Behaviour. A Lie is a Lie, whether given in the Preſence of a Mediator or a Pimp. The Place alters not its Property; for which Reaſon, let him look to himſelf who dares give it me.

Otter. Boldly challeng'd, old Tough; thy Heart is good at leaſt———I can't, however, boaſt much of the Head-piece.

[*Whiſpering to the* Horſe.

Horſe. Mr. *Mediator*, my Friend here is ſomewhat haſty and cholerick; but exceſſive good-natur'd. I take upon me to ſay that he intended you no Affront.

Aſs. Not I; but if he take it, Let'n; and that for him.—— [*Letting a rouſing F——t.*

Goat. This is paſt bearing.——

[*A hidious Noiſe without.*

Aſs. Ay, ſo it is.———Take Care you don't be-foul your Breeches, old Gentleman.

SCENE XIII.

Enter the Monkey, *leading the* Bear *muzzled.*

Monk. Here, Shantelmen and Ladies de fine Raree-Show——You ſhall zee, vat you ſhall zee. Eh, eh!

Aſs. 'Oons! Neighbour *Otter*, is that our *Bear*; that Animal that coſt us ſuch a d——d Sight of Money?

Otter. The ſame.

Aſs. Is it not all a Contrivance to Bubble us?

Wou'd ſo ſtrong a Beaſt elſe ſuffer himſelf to be muzzled by ſo little an Urchin?

Otter. You forget how that Urchin you affect to deſpiſe, keeps the whole Foreſt in Awe.—— Zooks! what's here? more *Bears.*

[*The Cry of a* Buck-Hound *without.*

Aſs. I'll be hang'd if this ben't our Courier with Account of ſome d——d Trick of the perfidious *Fox.*

Fox. The News comes to my Wiſh.

[*Aſide to the* Leopard.

Enter the Hound *almoſt ſuffocated with Sweat and Duſt.*

Hound. Ah, Gentle-folks! ——— Excuſe me for a Moment.———I made ſuch Speed to inform you of your Danger——and the Perfidy of the *Fox*———

Aſs. I thought as much. He ne'er will be honeſter 'till he is knock'd on the Head.

Hound. Wretched *Otter!* Thy principal *Barrier* is in *Reynard*'s Hands.

Aſs. Ah, the Villain! to attack us while we are in Conſultation about Peace!—— 'Oons! unmuzzle the *Bear*, and let us be reveng'd.——

[*The* Bear, *unmuzzled by the* Tygreſs, *ruſhes on the* Fox, *who runs off with his Confederates, ſimpering and tittering; then makes furiouſly at the* Monkey, *who leaps on his Back; and ſpringing off again, addreſſes him ſelf to the Company, who all cringe to, and fawn upon him.*

Monk. Enough, enough:———You know me little, or you wou'd not think to cajole and win me by ſuch flattering Careſſes. You wou'd

wou'd have had me if I had not been ill-uſed by ſome of you, from whom I expected other Treatment.———You know my Maxim is, to love my ſelf better than all the World beſide. I am no longer a Friend to the *Fox* than I find my Account in keeping well with him. But when you can ſhew me that it will be my Intereſt to break with him, I am yours; mean-while, take this well-meant Advice.

In vain you wage the War, or ſeek for Peace,
'Till Civil Dudgeon 'mong your ſelves ſhall ceaſe.

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